1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

The same pattern is used to decorate a bride and bridegroom after their marriage. In the initiation ceremonies the youth or girl is decorated in this way before the dances at the turtle-eating and pig-eating ceremonies. The same pattern is also made on a corpse before burial. 302

In all these cases the whole body is decorated. On less ceremonial occasions, such as an ordinary dance when there are no visitors of importance in the camp, a man frequently has his face alone decorated with white clay, as in the photograph of Plate XIII.

The third kind of material used for painting the body is red paint. This is applied in two different ways. When a man or woman is ill he or she is generally to be seen with some part of his body smeared with red paint. For colds and coughs the chest and neck are painted. In fevers red paint is smeared on the upper lip. Besides the medical use of red paint, if we may call it so, there is a ceremonial use, the pigment being used in combination with white clay, lines of red paint being applied to the body between the lines of clay of the snake pattern. It is used in this way to decorate the body of a dead person for burial, and on ceremonial occasions such as the dance at the end of mourning and the dances in connection with the initiation ceremonies. 302 755

Most of the ornaments worn at various times by the Andaman Islanders have a ceremonial or a magical purpose. The only things worn by men that can be considered to have a utilitarian value are the belt of rope and the necklet of string. The belt may be a plain piece of rope, or it may be ornamented with the yellow skin of a species of *Dendrobium*. It serves as a receptacle in which the natives carry such things as adzes, fish, roots, or even arrows. It is the one object that is constantly worn by men. The string necklet is simply a length of thin string tied round the neck. It serves as a means of carrying a knife and skewer. The knife, in former days made of a slip of cane, but in these times from a piece of scrap iron, is attached to a skewer of *Areca* wood by a short length of rope or stout string. By sliding either the knife or the skewer under the necklet at the back of the neck the double implement hangs securely in 301

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

a position where it is not likely to get lost when running through the jungle, and where it is immediately accessible when wanted. The necklet also serves as a means of carrying bees'-wax, which is in constant use amongst the natives, a small ball of the wax being attached to one of the ends of the string of which the necklet is made.

As a rule, in everyday life, the men wear only a belt, or a belt and necklace. Those natives who visit the Settlement of Port Blair have been required by the European officers to wear a strip of cloth over the genitals. It has now become the rule to wear such a loin cloth whenever they are in the neighbourhood of a European. This, however, is a modern custom, and in former times the men went freely with no covering whatever, as do the inhabitants of the Little Andaman at the present time. As showing the extent to which the natives have been influenced in this matter by outside opinion, it may be mentioned that at the present day many of the younger men, particularly those who have been brought up at Port Blair, regard it as very immodest to be seen without some covering over the genitals.

On ceremonial occasions, such as the dance at the end of mourning, or a big dance-meeting, the men put on a number of ornaments. A common costume on such occasions consists of a belt, necklace, bracelets, and garters of netting and *Dentalium* shell. A belt and necklace of this kind are to be seen in Plate V, and garters are worn by the woman in Plate IX. An alternative costume for men consists of a set of ornaments of *Pandanus* leaf (belt, chaplet, bracelets and garters), decorated with *Dentalium* and other shells. Garters of this kind are shown in Plate XII.

Other objects are worn by the natives for magical purposes. Chief amongst these are the strings made of human bones which are worn to prevent and cure sickness. The bones are attached to a length of rope, and this is generally decorated with shells or with *Dendrobium* skin. These strings of bones are worn most commonly as chaplets, necklaces or belts, but they may also be made into garters and bracelets. The bones of animals, such as pig, turtle, dugong, etc., are treated in exactly the same way

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

as human bones, and ornaments made of them are commonly worn.

There are a number of other ornaments that are commonly worn, not only on ceremonial occasions, which, unlike the strings of human bones, do not obviously have a magical purpose. Such are necklaces made of various kinds of shells, and of mangrove seeds. At the present time the natives obtain beads from Port Blair and make ornaments of these.

The ordinary costume of the women is different from that of the men. Every woman and girl wears at least one belt of *Pandanus* leaf. There is one kind of belt that is always worn by married women and which may not be worn by unmarried girls. There is another kind of belt that may only be worn by unmarried girls. The women of the Southern tribes wear a bundle of leaves of the *Mimusops littoralis* laid one over another suspended from the front of the belt so as to cover the pudenda. In the Northern tribes it was formerly the custom for the women to wear a similar apron of the leaves of a plant called *čainyo*, and over this they also wore a tassel of shredded palm-leaf stem (*koro*). Within recent years the Northern tribes have given up their own custom in this matter and have adopted the custom of the Southern tribes.

Women often wear round the neck a piece of string similar to that worn by the men, but as they do not carry knives it does not serve the same purpose. It is more usual for a woman to wear a necklace of some sort. Nowadays they are rather fond of necklaces of beads which they obtain from the Settlement at Port Blair. In former times different kinds of shells were used, such as the *Dentalium octogonum*.

With the exception that men wear the belt of rope, and women wear the belt of *Pandanus* leaf and the apron of leaves, there is no difference between the ornaments worn by men and by women. On the occasion of a dance or other ceremony a woman may wear any of the objects described as being worn by men on such occasions. They also wear in the same way strings of human or animal bones.

One object which would seem to have a purely utilitarian purpose is the sling used for carrying children (called in *Aka-*

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

have extraordinary powers. Hence a man who is an acknowledged *oko-jumu* is sure to receive a good share of the game caught by others, and presents of all kinds from those who seek his good-will.

As the name implies, and in whatever way his power may have been obtained, an *oko-jumu* is privileged to dream in a way that less favoured persons do not. In his dreams he can communicate with the spirits of the dead. In dreams, also, so the natives say, he is able to cause the illness of an enemy or to cure that of a friend.

By his communication with the spirits, in dreams, or in waking life, the *oko-jumu* acquires magical knowledge that he is able to turn to account in curing illness and in preventing bad weather. When a person is ill the *oko-jumu* is often consulted as to the best means of treating the patient. His treatment is often limited to the recommendation, or the application, of some one or other of the recognized remedies. He may undertake to dispel the spirits that are supposed to be the cause of the disease, which he does by addressing them and conjuring them to go away, or by the use of one or other of the substances and objects that are believed to have the power of keeping spirits at a distance. Sometimes the *oko-jumu* will promise to cure the patient by means of dreams. It is believed that in his dreams he can communicate with the spirits and can persuade them to help him to cure the sick person.

Besides their power of causing or curing sickness, the *oko-jumu* are credited with being able to control the weather. As has been shown, the Andamanese believe that the weather is under the control of two beings named *Biliku* and *Tarai*. There is, however, an alternative and contradictory belief, which is also held, that the weather is controlled by the spirits, and particularly by those of the sea. The means taken by magicians or others to prevent bad weather can be divided into two kinds according as they are directed against *Biliku* or *Tarai*, or against the spirits of the sea. As an example of the very simple rites which are performed for this purpose, two cases may be quoted. One of the *oko-jumu* of the Northern tribes, now dead, once stopped a very violent storm by crushing between two stones

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

a piece of the *Anadendron paniculatum* and diving with it into the sea where he placed it under a rock on the reef. A more recent example is very similar. A man still living, named *Jire Pilečar*, who was, in a way, the successor of the man formerly mentioned, is said to have stopped a violent storm by using the leaves and bark of the *Ficus laccifera* in the same way, that is by crushing them and placing them under a rock in the sea. In both these cases it would seem that the rite was directed not against *Biliku* and *Tarai*, but against the *Jurua*.

Apart from his power to communicate directly with the spirits, the *oko-jumu* owes his position to a superior knowledge of the magical properties of common substances and objects. This knowledge he is supposed to obtain from the spirits. However, a lesser degree of knowledge on such matters is possessed by everybody. Thus in the treatment of sickness there are a number of magical remedies of which anyone can make use without consulting an *oko-jumu*.

A complete enumeration of all the things that are believed to possess magical properties is, of course, not possible, but the following notes refer to all the most important.

We may consider first of all the magical properties of mineral substances. One of the most important of these is red ochre. Yellow ochre, which is found in pockets in many parts of the islands, is collected and burnt, when it turns red, and the powder so obtained is either used by itself or is made into a paint with pig or turtle fat. The powder is mixed with water and taken internally. Red paint is applied to the throat and chest for coughs and colds and sore throats, and round the ear for ear-ache. When a man feels unwell he often smears red paint on his upper lip just below his nostrils. In this way, the natives say, the "smell" of the paint cures his sickness. The paint is sometimes used as a dressing for wounds or centipede bites. Its use for ornamenting the body on ceremonial occasions has already been noted in the last chapter.

In the North Andaman a soft red stone is found, called *talar*. This is used as a substitute for red paint. It is rubbed on the body, or it is powdered and the powder is mixed with water and taken internally.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

755 278 823 White clay (*ṭȯl-odu* in *Aka-Jeru*) is sometimes used medicinally, both externally and internally. The commoner clay (*odu* in *Aka-Jeru*) is plastered on sores, and has the effect of keeping off flies, if it does nothing else.

An olive-coloured earth (called *čulya* in *Aka-Bea*), found in certain springs, is prized as a remedy. It is mixed with water and taken internally as a general remedy for all sorts of complaints.

824 784 Turning now to the magical properties of vegetable substances, there are a large number of these, and some of them have not been botanically identified.

The *Anadendron paniculatum* is a plant from which the Andamanese obtain a valuable fibre, which they use for their bow-strings, and for thread with which to make their arrows and harpoons. A number of magical properties are attributed to this plant. [753] Rheumatism is supposed to be due to the "smell" of the plant getting into the system when the fibre is being prepared[1]. The "smell" of the green plant, or of the fibre until it has been thoroughly dried for some days, is believed to frighten away turtle. A man who has been preparing the fibre would not dream of joining a turtle-hunting expedition, for his presence in the canoe would be sufficient to drive away all the turtle. A turtle-hunting expedition would be a failure if a piece of the green creeper were in the canoe. A man who has been handling the plant may not cook turtle, for the meat would be "bad," i.e., uneatable. The same thing would happen if turtle meat accidentally came in contact with a piece of the plant. All this applies only to the green creeper, and not to the fibre after it has been properly prepared and dried. The fibre itself is used for binding the heads of turtle-harpoons, so it is evidently regarded as harmless.

If a piece of the *Anadendron* creeper were burnt in the fire the natives believe that it would drive all the turtle away from the neighbourhood, or, according to another statement, that there would be a great storm.

000 So far we have considered the properties of the plant only in

[1] In preparing the fibre, the skin or bark of the young shoots of the plant is torn off in strips and these are placed on the thigh and scraped with a *Cyrena* shell.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

"smell" will drive away turtle, and leaves should therefore not be taken in a canoe. A man who has been handling the leaves would not go turtle-hunting. 824 278 757

Another remedy is a species of *Alpinia*. The leaves and stems of this plant are chewed and the juice swallowed for certain ailments. The plant is also used when taking honey. A man takes some of the leaves in his mouth and chews them well. Before taking the honeycomb he sprays the saliva from his mouth over and around it. He may also rub the chewed leaves over his body. The natives say that in this way they are able to prevent the bees from stinging them.

Magical properties are attributed to a number of plants that have not been botanically identified. Thus the leaves of a small tree called *tare* in *Aka-Jeru* are crushed and moistened with water and rubbed over the body as a remedy for illness. A strip of bark from the same tree is tied round the chest of a man with a pain in his chest. The bark of two trees called (in *Aka-Jeru*) *tip* and *laro* is crushed and moistened and rubbed over a sick man's body. The leaves of a plant called *pare* are crushed with water and the infusion is drunk by persons suffering from diarrhœa and abdominal pains. A creeper called *korotli* is crushed and tied round a limb in cases of snake-bite. The seeds of the *Entada scandens* are heated in the fire and applied (while hot) to such wounds as that from the tusk of a boar.

There are a certain number of trees and plants about which the natives say that any person cutting them will become blind. The names of four of these in *Aka-Jeru* are *jin*, *burut*, *dey*, and *mit*.

We may turn now to animals and animal substances. Magical properties are attributed to bees'-wax, particularly to black bees'-wax. In a case of pleurisy black bees'-wax was heated until it was soft, and then smeared over the man's chest. Bees'-wax is believed to keep away the spirits of the forest. 825 278 755

If a man be bitten by a snake and the snake be killed it is skinned and the inner surface of the skin is applied to the wound.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

827 A hiccough is supposed to be the result of inadvertently swallowing a tree lizard, whose call rather resembles the sound of a person hiccoughing.

The condition popularly called "pins and needles" or described as an arm or leg "going to sleep" is believed by the Andamanese to be due to the bite of a rat. If a man wakes up in the night with one of his limbs benumbed in this way, he believes that a rat has bitten him while he slept.

The Andamanese say that the bite of a civet-cat (*Paradoxurus*) will produce cramp. I was once told that if a man eats the flesh of the civet-cat and then goes into the water he will become "lame." This means, I think, that he will have cramp, and so will be unable to swim.

278 The flesh and particularly the fat of the flying fox (*Pteropus*) is believed to be a remedy for rheumatism. An old man who was suffering from this ailment once asked me to shoot for him some of these bats, which he cooked and ate.

784 If turtle-fat be permitted to burn in the fire there will be a storm.

751 Mention has already been made of the magical value attributed to human bones. They are esteemed as a means of
755 driving away spirits, and therefore of curing or preventing sickness. A human jaw-bone was hanging in my hut in such a position that it could swing in the wind. The natives attributed to this the illness from which I and several of them were suffering at the time, and asked me to put the bone away in a basket, where it could not move.

Bones of animals are made into ornaments in the same way as human bones, and magical properties of a similar kind seem to be attributed to them.

755 Of other objects possessing magical properties the most
372 important is fire. Fire is believed to have the power of keeping away spirits of the sea and of the forest. A fire is always kept alight beside a sick man or woman. For dysentery stones are heated in a fire and the patient is required to defecate on to these.

000 In conclusion, mention must be made of one favourite remedy

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

In conclusion, mention must be made of one favourite remedy of the Andamanese, namely scarification. The part of the body that is the seat of pain is scarified, as the forehead for headaches, the cheek for toothache. A number of very small incisions are made in the skin close together, with a sharp flake of quartz or glass. The incisions are just deep enough to cut through the skin and cause a little blood to ooze out, but not so deep as to produce a flow of blood. The operation is the work of women. It is probably more frequently used than any other remedy except red paint and human bones.

304
755

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

164 **Medicine.**—1. The diseases most common among these tribes are:—

1st, malarial fever (*did·dirya-*).
2nd, catarrh (*ngī·rib-*).
3rd, coughs (*ō·dag-*).
4th, rheumatism (*mŏl-*).
5th, phthisis.
6th, pneumonia.
7th, heart disease.[1]

757 278 2. In febrile complaints the treatment adopted by those living in the interior, and less frequently by the coast dwellers,[2] is the following:—A bed is made for the patient of the leaves of the *Trigonostemon longifolius* (*gū·gma-*), and his body is rubbed with these leaves, which are sometimes first boiled, while he sniffs at some crushed pieces of the same; after a time *chū·lugâ-*[3] is given him to drink, and then with some of their patent ointment, *kòi·ob-*,[4] which is not used internally, as has been supposed,[5] the upper lip is painted and also the neck, if the invalid be married. When the fever is accompanied by pains in the chest or head, a *chàw·ga-tâ-*[6] is tied tightly round the part affected, as this is [755] believed to act as a charm, internal pains being always ascribed to the malign influence of evil spirits. During the course of the fever, the patient is constantly rubbed with *gū·gma-* leaves by one or more friends, who insist also upon his swallowing large quantities of *chū·luga-*; scarifying is never practised at such times. As only a small proportion of cases of this kind have a fatal result, great faith is placed in the treatment above described, and, at all events, it is certain that no injurious effects are caused by it.

757 3. The first half of the rainy season is usually the most sickly time with them, as with ourselves, in regard to fever and bowel

among the women of suckling each other's infants; in fact many parents have thus become tainted with the disease, the characteristics of which have in almost every case been most strongly marked, presenting an interesting study to the medical officers who have had charge of the patients. Great benefit was derived from the treatment and remedies (mercury and iodide of potassium) usually employed in Europe, but time alone will show how far our efforts will avail to prevent the disease from infecting the entire population, if, indeed, it do not, as in certain parts of Australia, lead to the early extermination of the race.

[753] [1] Because of the insidious nature, and (to them) mysterious origin, of the last three named diseases, they say that either *ē·rem-chàw·gala* has shot the sufferer, or *jūru-win-* has speared him: regarding these evil spirits further reference will be found at "Death and Burial," paragraph 25, and "Religious Beliefs and Demonology," paragraphs 12 and 14.

[2] The reason for this will be found under "Tribal Communities," paragraph 5.

[3] *Vide* Appendix B, No. 63.

[4] *Vide* Appendix B, No. 60.

[5] *Vide* Mouat, p. 306.

[6] *Vide* Appendix B, No. 44.

2: Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

affections. Those natives who have been long with us, have great faith in our medicines, especially in the efficacy of quinine for curing fever, from which, as exposure is very trying to their constitutions, they suffer greatly when living in the clearings we have made at Port Blair. 757

4. For a cold in the head they merely remain at home and nurse themselves, crouching over the fire; for a cough, sea-water is often drunk, or they will chew the thick portion of the long leaves of a plant called *jī·ni-* (of the *Alpinia* species), and when the bitter juice has been extracted and swallowed, tie the chewed fibre round the neck; if benefit be not derived from this, they then take a piece of the upper portion of the stem of the *Calamosagus laciniosus*, called *pôr-*, and, removing the bark, chew the rest, and swallow the sap. Many cures having been attributed to the wonderful properties of the two descriptions of *chū·lnga-*, one or two quarts daily are prescribed to the unhappy patient, until the cough leaves him. 757 278

5. In cases of rheumatism and paralysis, a *chàu·ga-tâ-* is tied round the parts affected, and *chū·lnga-*, moist as found, is rubbed into them: if no relief is experienced within a day or so, warm water is poured over the suffering members, which are then shampooed; should no improvement result, even after these measures, recourse is had to scarification; this is done with a quartz or glass flake, by a woman, generally the wife or one near of kin to the sufferer. It has been noticed that but few of those who have been attacked by rheumatism in the jungle ever regain the full use of their limbs. 757 304

6. In phthisis, or when any internal organ is diseased, steps are taken by the friends of the patient to defeat the machinations of the evil one, to whom the victim's sufferings are attributed; to this end, one or more *chàu·ga-tâ-* are first fastened tightly over the seat of pain, a lump of black beeswax, *tō·bul-pīd-*,[1] is then held over a fire till it begins to melt, when it is instantly applied, being passed rapidly over the flesh; the wax which adheres is not removed, but wears off in a few days. The patient is also subjected to pressure with the hands by a relative or friend of the same sex, while an attendant frequently sucks the skin. Scarification is the *dernier ressort* when the bad symptoms increase.[2] [755] [278]

7. Every attention is paid to the wants and wishes of the sick, and the friends do all in their power to effect recovery, but no charms, excepting the *chàu·ga-tâ-*, are employed in the hope of 757 751

[1] *Vide* Appendix B, No. 57.

[2] As many bad cases of lung disease among those in the homes have been successfully treated with cod liver oil, they have now great faith in that medicine.

2: Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

Soon after delivery, sema warm
water is given to the woman to drink; she is also fed with 846
meat-gravy, and the water in which shell or other fish have been boiled; after a time, should she desire it, fish, shell-fish, yams, or fruit are given her, but no meat.[1] During the first two or three days, she remains in a sitting posture, propped up by articles arranged so as to form a couch. As might be supposed, from the active habits and unsophisticated manners of these people, their women rarely suffer much during labour and child-birth; in fact, no instances of difficult delivery are known.[2]

12. For ear-ache, head-ache, and tooth-ache, recourse is had, in 755 ●
the first instance, to the *chàu'ga-tâ-*, then to scarification, should the pain continue and cause swelling.

13. In cases of skin disease, they afford relief, at least from 757
irritation, by applying to the parts affected a large smooth stone previously warmed over a fire.

14. When a wound is inflicted by a thorn, stone, shell, &c., 752
hot water is poured over it from a *Cyrena* shell, which is then 278
heated and applied to the part as hot as it can be borne; or, if the injury be slight, sea-bathing is prescribed, as it is said to expedite the healing process. In treating a boil, they scarify all round the swelling in order to reduce the inflammation, and afterwards bathe it with *chû'lnga-* "lotion." This substance is also taken internally when suffering from dysentery, while for diarrhœa they swallow small quantities of a whitish clay, called *kôtrē'o-*.

15. The *larvæ* of bees found attached to honeycombs is eaten 757
to correct constipation, or, if in season, the fruits of two trees, 278
ô'ropa- and *chôb-*, which are much relished, and not without reason.

16. Their method of treating a case of epilepsy is to sprinkle 757
the patient with cold water, and then to scarify his brow.

17. When bitten by a snake (especially a venomous one), if 752
they succeed in killing it, they cut it open, and apply the kidney fat to the wound, rubbing it in for some time; should they fail in capturing the reptile, a ligament is tied above the bite, and the surrounding flesh is scarified. Deaths from snake bites, though not unknown, are rare. The late chief of the Middle Strait community died in a few hours from the bite of a certain tree snake called *tâ'ga-jō'bo-*,[3] in September, 1878, and another

[1] During menstruation they abstain from pork, *Paradoxurus*, turtle, honey, and yams, and live upon certain varieties of fish, sour fruits, iguanas, and prawns.

[2] The custom known by the name of *couvade*, or the paternal lying-in, is quite unknown among the Andamanese.

[3] This snake is said to be the most deadly, after which the *lâ'rabe-* and *wâ'ra-jō'bo-* are the most dreaded. The last appears to be the *Ophiophagus elaps*. Further allusion to the *lâ'rabe-* and the *wâ'ra-jō'bo-* will be made under "Superstitions."

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

of which are declared to have been borne out subsequently by some unforeseen event, as, for instance, a sudden death by accident. 791 431

3. In order to maintain his status it is necessary for an *ôko-pai'ad-* to give fresh evidences of his powers from time to time, for, so long as his companions have faith in him, he is the constant recipient of presents of all kinds, which are unblushingly given[1] and accepted as bribes to curry favour.

4. Sometimes, owing to the multiplicity of these gifts, it is inconvenient to the *ôko-pai'ad-* to take charge of them; he then enters into an arrangement with the donors that such articles as he does not at present need shall be available for his use or appropriation whenever he may require them; hence many individuals possess property which is said to be *râ'dare* (*i.e.*, bespoken) by a certain seer, and which is, therefore, not available for presentation to anyone else.

5. If a disaster occur which they think might have been averted had the *ôko-pai'ad-* chosen to exercise his powers, they are said sometimes to conspire to kill him, but so greatly is he feared that not a single instance is known of anyone having ventured to carry such a plan into execution. 791

6. The position and influence possessed by a seer are not affected by his falling ill, but if some serious misfortune occur to him, such as the death of a child, it is looked upon as a sign that his power is waning, or that he has at least lost a portion of it; they, however, continue to stand in awe of him unless, as time passes, he fails to afford further proof of his supposed superiority. His wife enjoys no distinction, nor is she treated with more respect and consideration than any other woman of the like age in the tribe.

7. The *ôko-pai'ad-* is credited with the power of communicating in dreams with the invisible powers of good and evil, and also of seeing the spirits of the departed, or of those who are ill. On the occurrence of an epidemic in an encampment, he brandishes a burning log, and bids the evil spirit keep at a distance; sometimes, as a further precaution, he plants stakes a few feet high in front of each hut, painted in stripes with black beeswax (*tō'bul-pīd-*), the smell of which being peculiarly offensive to this demon, called *ē'rem-chàu'gala*, insures his speedy departure from their midst. 791 755

8. Though we may be disposed to question the belief of the *ôko-pai'ad-*s themselves in the supernatural powers they profess to possess, it is quite possible that they, like sorcerers in other 791

[1] Especially is this done by those advanced in years for fear of their end being hastened by the *ôko-pai'ad-* whom they fail to propitiate.

164 Going a little further into detail, it has been noticed that malarial fevers are commonest in June, at the commencement of the monsoon and during heavy bursts of rain thereafter. Malarial fevers commence as usual in their intermittent form and prove fatal as remittent fever. Other zymotic fevers are uncommon, though the Andamanese will drink the filthiest water.

A short rainfall in the Andamans is usually accompanied by high dry winds and then is the high time of the chest diseases. But though the Andamanese are susceptible to bronchial catarrh, and though chronic bronchitis is common, it is not fatal; pneumonia is however extremely fatal. Pleurisy, hæmoptysis and phthisis are comparatively rare.

Abdominal diseases, though comparatively uncommon, are very fatal, diarrhœa, including probably dysentery, claiming most victims. Dyspepsia and colic are both common. In health the stools are regular, but inclined to looseness. They have been likened to those of the lower mammals when in good health.

Of other diseases sunstroke is dreaded and always fatal. The brain and spinal cord are not often affected, though curvature of the spine is occasionally seen. Scurvy occurs at the seasons when vegetable diet, *i.e.*, such as fruits and [146] roots afford, is too scanty. Elephantiasis occurs among the Onges, but is limited to the Little Andaman. Chronic muscular rheumatism occurs among the older people, leading to loss and withering of limbs. Ulcers, generally the result of wounds in the jungles, are common and, as with the immigrants, slow to heal. Abscesses are also common. Considering that personal uncleanliness is often extreme, skin diseases are curiously infrequent, except ringworm and exfoliated dermatitis, sometimes leading to destruction of finger and toe nails, due either to scurvy or exposure.

164 Excluding malaria, endemic disease has not been recognised among the Andamanese, and the only epidemics that have been known to attack them are 177 imported pneumonia (1868), syphilis (1876), measles (1877), and influenza (1892), in that order: unhappily with disastrous effect. Exposure to the sun and wind in the cleared spaces, the excessive use of tobacco and over-clothing, as results of contact with civilisation, are also said to have undermined their health as a body of human beings. Intoxicants are forbidden to them by local rules and are not easily or commonly procured by them.

● 755 **Medicine.**—The diseases which the Andamanese distinguish by name are malarial fever, catarrh, coughs and rheumatism. Phthisis and heart disease are 758 recognised, but are spirit caused and so are all internal maladies, which of course are not understood.

Medicine and surgery are almost absent from the Andamanese purview. They will bleed on the forehead for fever and headache and round abscesses to alleviate pain. They scarify for rheumatism and internal pain as a last resort. Red ochre and various herbal concoctions are both swallowed and applied as all-healers, in which they have great faith. Certain leaves are sometimes applied to local affections and beds made of them for the sake of their supposed medicinal odour. Cinctures, sometimes of human bones, are used to alleviate pain, but no other charms are employed. Occasionally the diet is slightly changed to relieve illness and they are quick to avail themselves of the hospital provided for them. They are extremely afraid of European surgery and will tremble violently at the sight of the operating knife. They smear themselves with white clay and water against the heat of the sun and with red ochre and oil after dark as a protection against cold.

The sick are sympathetically and very kindly, but superstitiously, treated. [844] There are no pregnancy customs and those at childbirth are sensible and without superstition, difficult delivery being practically unknown.

Snakebite is uncommon and seldom fatal. Ligatures above the bite and scarifying are applied, both operations showing observation and common sense. Bites of centipedes, scorpions, leeches and ticks cause little inconvenience to the Andamanese, though very much to immigrants.

142 **Appearance.**—The figures of the men are muscular and well formed and generally pleasing; often a young man is distinctly good looking, for, though there is a tendency to prognathism, it is not commonly pronounced, while a straight and well formed nose and jaw, accompanied by superior intelligence

6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

started slapping his hands on Toncootĕi's and exposing them intermittently to the fire. All this lasted over a quarter of an hour. The patient was then made to lie prone, with his legs spread out, to receive a foot massage as described above, for another quarter of an hour. Torso, feet and hands were worked over, with short pauses for artificial respiration by means of compression. Subsequently his back, and particularly the sacral region, was vigorously rubbed by willing hands and feet. Three men performed this operation. Toncootĕi was finally allowed to rest, between two fires kept burning all night. Sunrise found him alive, and the fever had abated, due, I think, to a good European laxative that I had persuaded him to take.

In March 1952, I witnessed a sad episode, followed by the death of the patient, near my Labanare camp. A young mother was suffering from breast rhagades. Her baby was less than a month old, and she was also suckling another child, almost two years old, who had sharp teeth. It is a frequent kindly habit of the Onge to adopt babies ; and it is customary to breast-feed them up to the age of four. Some interesting consequences arise out of this habit, but I shall not analyze them here. A minor detail : since they are allowed to suckle when they wish and are weaned so late, Onge children do not indulge in thumb sucking. Considerable reactions are spontaneously established between the two terminal parts of the digestive tube – oral and anal, as though in physiological conflict. Once more I affirm that the evidence of Onge sexual behaviour positively denies Freudian theories with regard to the sexual life of children. Furthermore, young anthropoids and primitive people behave identically in this respect.

The adopted baby gave the young mother nipple wounds that became infected and suppurated. For lack of proper care and in unhygienic surroundings, the infection spread to the rest of her body. I found her suffering terribly from pain in the breast, muscular spasm and high fever. The Onge had applied their usual external remedies to her body, from head to foot. Very tight bandages of ficus bark, renewed three times a day, were wrapped arounds legs, arms, trunk and abdomen. Bright red ochre – rare in Little Andaman and considered more effective because of its brilliant colour – was painted onto the afflicted breast. The poor young woman looked at me hopefully. I suggested her immediate removal to Port Blair Hospital, and sent radio messages from my camp to the Chief Commissioner, Mr. A. K. GHOSH. He responded generously by ordering a ship to call for the patient, but the journey was useless because her relations were opposed to displacing her. In March 1952 my friendship with the Onge was only starting ; this will explain their refusal to follow my advice. Without proper care, in a place like Little Andaman, the patient died four days after my arrival at the camp.

Prescription of medicines and treatments such as those described above is not determined by specialists. Everybody submits to treatment, with general approval, convinced of its effectiveness. Witch doctors do not exist and perhaps never existed in the Andamans. Nothing, then, is known by the Onge of the dances and exhibitions, commonly executed elsewhere for curative purposes, that influence the patient on a psychobiological basis. As they have

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

head ornaments and religious ceremonies. In Oceania there is, too, the habit of changing personal names from time to time so prevalent among the Onges, and the existence of actual linguistic connections between Nicobarese, Andamanese, Semang, Aetà and peoples of Oceania have been demonstrated by experts.

Any differences which exist today are the result of centuries of contact with other peoples which the Semang and Aetà have experienced, unlike the Andamanese, who thus represent today the true Negritos. While life generally has changed somewhat over the centuries for the Semang and Aetà, certain typical facets of their culture have remained unaltered. Ritual cutting and distributing of game, the use of the arrow harpoon (always unfeathered) and the simple Onge-Negrito bow are still the same, despite the fact that the three groups have been separated for a very long time. Even the very absence of defensive weapons is a common feature; admittedly outside the Andamans arrows are poisoned and some may be feathered, but this is a recent and imitative innovation which is not found among the Andamanese, by virtue of their constant isolation. The persistence among the Onges of the simple bow tends to support the idea of Little Andaman as the first stage in the northward spread of the Negritos after they reached the island from Sumatra via the Nicobars. In Malacca the Semang have retained the same bow, as have the Aetà in the Philippines.

Among what may be termed similarities of physical habits is nose-rubbing as a sign of affection, found in the Andamans, in Oceania, and parts of Papuasia and Melanesia. In all these areas there is the same belief that pregnancy is due to entry of a spirit into the body, and the same habit of suckling children for as long as four years. Similar too throughout the area are the methods of 'curing' disease, such as smearing with ochre and heavy massage carried out beside a fire, swallowing of balls of ochre, and the 'smoking' of wounds, smeared with a mixture of ochre and honey. As protection from the sun or the rains (especially for the young children) crude umbrellas are made from giant palm leaves.

There are no prayers or propitiatory sacrifices to ensure health and well being, but there is throughout the area the same concept of mysterious forces to be feared, evaded, or let loose against enemies – never loved. Generally they are thought of in terms of spirits, usually active at night. There is some divergence in the